NATIONAL SCHOOLS CRICKET CUPS

National Under 15 One Day Cup

Competition Regulations 2027

ENGLISH SCHOOLS CRICKET ASSOCIATION

The National Under 15 One Day Cup is a knockout competition for school teams, run by the English Schools Cricket Association (ESCA) as part of the National Schools Cricket Cups. It is played in two phases: a county Under 14 competition in one year, and a national Under 15 competition between the county winners in the following year.

1. The competition and entry

1.1 **Organisation.** The competition is run by ESCA. The Competition Organisers are named on the draw information. Fixtures and results for the national rounds are published on the competition Play-Cricket site: escacompetitions.play-cricket.com.

1.2 **Who may enter.** Entry is open to all schools.

1.3 **Two phases.** The competition is played in two phases:

(a) the **county competition**, played within each county for pupils under 14 in the first year (section 3); and

(b) the **national competition**, played between the county winners, for pupils under 15, in the following year (section 4).

1.4 **Entry fee.** There is no entry fee for the national competition. Each county decides whether schools pay an entry fee or affiliation fee for the county competition.

1.5 **Play-Cricket.** Every school in the national competition must have a Play-Cricket site by 30 November 2026, so that fixtures and results can be recorded. This is not required for the county competition.

2. Eligibility

2.1 **Age.** In the county competition, players must be under 14 at midnight on the previous 31 August. In the national competition, players must be under 15 on 31 August 2026.

2.2 **School roll.** Players must be permanent bona fide pupils of the school, following its normal curriculum. In the national competition, players must have been on the school roll by 1 February 2027. In both competitions, players temporarily on roll for the summer term are not allowed to participate.

2.3 **National squad.** A school's team in the national competition may include pupils who did not play in the county competition, provided they meet rules 2.1 and 2.2.

2.4 **Overage players.** In the national competition, a player who is overage but in the same year group as the eligible players may be allowed to play under ESCA's Overage Players Policy, published at escaonline.co.uk. The school must apply to the ESCA General Secretary by 31 March 2027, and must not field the player until permission has been given. In the county competition, rule 2.1 applies unless the County Organiser has granted a local dispensation.

2.5 **Confirmation and penalties.** In the national competition, the General Secretary's decision on eligibility is final, and a school that fields an ineligible player will be removed from the competition and may be barred from entering for up to two further years.

3. The county competition

3.1 **Organisation.** The county competition is organised by County Organisers, appointed by the County Schools Cricket Association or the County Board, whichever is responsible for organising schools competitions in that county. County Organisers make the county draw.

3.2 **Timing.** All county rounds, including the county final, must be completed by 30 September in the year of the county competition, so that county winners can go into the national draw. A county that has not completed all its rounds, including the final, by that date forfeits its place in the national competition. ESCA will ask each county for its winner, with the contact teacher's name and email, as part of the county's annual data return.

3.3 **Fixtures.** The first-named school in each pairing is drawn at home. It is responsible for the arrangements and for making the first contact with its opponents.

3.4 **Umpires and scorers.** Each school provides one umpire and one scorer for all county matches. In county matches only, an umpire may also act as scorer.

3.5 **Results.** The winning school informs the County Organiser of the result.

3.6 **Playing conditions.** The playing conditions in section 5 apply in the county competition, including rule 5.2 (pink ball; coloured clothing, with whites or PE kit acceptable), except that:

(a) the fielding restrictions in rule 5.7 apply, but if the circle cannot be marked, the umpires use their judgement to decide whether fielders are inside or outside it;

(b) there is no expectation that DLS is used: where the side batting second has its overs reduced, its target is set by the run rate of the side batting first (rule 5.12); and

(c) the County Organiser may set a shorter match length than in rule 5.3, but every match must be scheduled for at least 20 overs per side before any reduction for weather. The bowling limit in rule 5.6 is then one-fifth of the scheduled overs.

3.7 **Disputes.** Disputes in the county competition are decided by the County Organiser.

3.8 **Local arrangements.** Round deadlines, replays of weather-affected matches, transport and withdrawals in the county competition are decided locally by the County Organiser, within the 30 September deadline in rule 3.2.

4. The national competition

4.1 **Draw.** The national draw is made by ESCA and circulated to the schools concerned. It names the Competition Organisers and gives the deadline date for each round.

4.2 **Home school.** The first-named school in each pairing is drawn at home. It is responsible for the arrangements and for making the first contact with its opponents. Semi-finals are played on the ground of the first-named school.

4.3 **Deadlines.** Matches must be played by the deadline dates laid down in the draw. If the original match cannot take place, an alternative date before the deadline may be agreed. The alternative date is then binding, and a side that cancels it must give a walkover to the other side. Only in exceptional circumstances may a match be played after the deadline, and then only with the advance agreement of the relevant Competition Organiser named on the draw.

4.4 **Weather.** If rain prevents a result, the match is replayed before the deadline date for that round. Only one replay is allowed. If no result is reached because of the weather, or a replay cannot be arranged before the deadline date, the result is decided by a bowl-out (rule 5.14). As a last resort, it is decided by the toss of a coin.

4.5 **Results.** The home school posts the result on Play-Cricket within 24 hours, showing both teams' runs, wickets and overs, and also emails the result to the relevant Competition Organiser.

4.6 **Transport.** Each school is responsible for its own transport.

4.7 **Withdrawal.** A school that has to withdraw must tell its opponents and the relevant Competition Organiser, as named on the draw, as early as possible. Failure to do so may prevent the school entering the following year.

4.8 **The Final.** The Final is played on the date and at the venue named on the draw. The organisers meet the costs of the ground, umpires, balls and meals. The Final will not be rearranged. If a result cannot be reached, the trophy is shared.

5. Playing conditions

The Laws of Cricket (2017 Code, 4th edition 2026) and the ECB's guidance for junior cricket apply, except as set out below.

5.1 **Teams.** A team may consist of 12 players, of whom 11 may bat and only 11 may field at any one time.

5.2 **Match ball and clothing.** A pink ball must be used, and the same type of ball must be used in both innings. The home school provides both match balls. Teams play in coloured clothing; whites or normal PE kit are also acceptable.

5.3 **Duration.** One innings per side of 35 overs (fewer by arrangement if necessary, but in the national competition not fewer than 30 overs per side).

5.4 **Result.** The side scoring more runs wins.

5.5 **Ties.** If scores are level, a Super Over decides the match: the team batting second bats first; the loss of two wickets ends the over; if still level, the side hitting more boundaries in the Super Over wins; if still level, a count-back from the last ball decides it.

5.6 **Bowling.** No bowler may bowl more than 7 overs, or one-fifth of the overs in a reduced innings (rounded so that the minimum number of bowlers get one extra over). If a bowler cannot finish an over, another bowler completes it, and it counts as a full over for both. The current ECB Fast Bowling Regulations for players aged 19 and below apply. (For players aged 14 and 15 on the day of the match, these currently allow no more than 5 overs in a spell and 12 in a day, so a full 7-over allocation must be bowled in two spells.)

5.7 Fielding restrictions.

(a) The fielding restriction area is two semi-circles of 30 yards' radius around the middle stump at each end, joined by straight lines, and marked by continuous painted white lines or dots at 5-yard intervals. (For county matches where the circle cannot be marked, see rule 3.6(a).)

(b) No more than 5 fielders may be on the leg side at the instant of delivery.

(c) No more than 5 fielders may be outside the area at the instant of delivery, throughout the innings.

(d) A breach is called and signalled No ball by the square-leg umpire.

5.8 **Close fielders.** No fielder other than the wicketkeeper may stand closer than 8 yards from the middle stump until the batter has played at the ball, in line with ECB junior fielding regulations.

5.9 **Short-pitched bowling.** Law 41.6 applies, with these additions. Regardless of how wide of the striker it is, no more than two deliveries per over may pass, or would have passed, clearly above shoulder height of the striker standing upright at the popping crease. Each further such delivery is called and signalled No ball. A bowler no-balled a second time in an innings for this is removed from the attack for the rest of the innings.

5.10 **Free hit.** The delivery after any No ball is a free hit, on which the batter can only be out in ways allowed from a No ball. Fielders may not change position for a free hit unless the striker changes.

5.11 Delayed start and interruptions.

(a) If the start is delayed, no overs are lost until one hour after the scheduled start. After that, overs are reduced at one over per 3 minutes 45 seconds lost, to a minimum of 10 overs per side.

(b) If play is interrupted after the first hour, overs are reduced at one over per 3 minutes 45 seconds lost from the time of the interruption. An interruption in the first hour is treated as in (a).

(c) If the stoppage is in the first innings, overs are reduced so that both sides face the same number of overs (minimum 10 each).

(d) If the stoppage is in the second innings, overs are reduced so that a result is obtained.

5.12 **Revised targets.** If the side batting second has its overs reduced below those of the side batting first, its target is revised:

(a) in the national competition, the DLS method using Play-Cricket Scorer should be used where possible, with par scores shown throughout the second innings;

(b) otherwise, and in the county competition, in proportion to the run rate of the side batting first.

5.13 **Minimum for a result.** Each side must have the chance to face at least 10 overs for a match to count. If this cannot be achieved, the result is decided by a bowl-out (rule 5.14) or, as a last resort, the toss of a coin.

5.14 **Bowl-out.** Five players from each side bowl two deliveries each at an unguarded wicket. The side hitting the wicket most often wins; if equal, the same players bowl one ball each in turn until there is a winner.

6. Umpires, scorers, conduct and disputes

6.1 **Umpires (national competition).** All umpires should be members of the ECB Association of Cricket Officials (ACO). A school may provide its own competent umpire if the opposing school agrees. Where umpires are paid, the two schools share the cost. ESCA will appoint umpires for the Final. (For the county competition, see rule 3.4.)

6.2 **Scorers (national competition).** Each school provides a competent scorer. Ideally one scorer uses electronic scoring, to support DLS calculations and uploading to Play-Cricket.

6.3 **Safety.** Batters, and wicketkeepers standing up to the stumps, must wear helmets, in line with ECB guidance for young players.

6.4 **Conduct.** Players, staff and spectators are bound by the Laws of Cricket (including Law 41 and Law 42), the ECB General Conduct Regulations and the ESCA Disciplinary Policy. Umpires should report any breach, including poor conduct by staff, to the ESCA General Secretary (info@escaonline.co.uk), copying in the school's teacher in charge, within 48 hours, using the ESCA Disciplinary Report Form, available from escaonline.co.uk.

6.5 **Disputes.** Disputes about results or any other matter are referred to the ESCA General Secretary, whose decision is final.

Mark Fenton, General Secretary
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